

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ALGIER 02951 161050Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 EB-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /085 W
----- 026075 /41

R 161015Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5617
INFO AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY RABAT
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 2951

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, AG
SUBJECT: LARAKI-BOUTEFLIKA MEETING IN PARIS

1. BRITISH AMBASSADOR STATES HE INFORMED BY LOCAL
AMBASSADOR WHOSE COUNTRY INVOLVED IN SAHARA MEDIATIONS
THAT THERE NO QUESTION BUT THAT LARAKI AND BOUTEFLIKA MET
IN PARIS UNDER SAUDI AUSPICES IN LATE NOVEMBER. BRITISH
AMBASSADOR STATES THAT LOCAL AMBASSADOR IN POSITION TO
KNOW AND ADDS THAT THIS REPORT, COMBINED WITH OTHER
INFORMATION HE HAS RECEIVED, CONVINCES HIM THAT MEETING
DID INDEED TAKE PLACE. HE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER MOUKNASS
ATTENDED OR NOT.

2. QUESTION REMAINS WHAT NEXT. CONSENSUS AMONG
OBSERVERS HERE IS THAT ALGERIANS AGREED TO MEETING
BECAUSE THEY, LIKE OTHERS, CANNOT REFUSE A SAUDI REQUEST,
BUT THAT SAUDI INITIATIVE, LIKE EARLIER INITIATIVE BY
EGYPTIAN VP MUBARAK, WILL ULTIMATELY STUMBLE OVER
IRRECONCILABLE MOROCCAN AND ALGERIAN POSITIONS.
WE CAN HYPOTHESIZE USUAL REASONS FOR ALGERIAN
CONCESSIONS IN SAHARA -- FINANCIAL SQUEEZE, NEED TO
FOCUS ON INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT, DESIRE TO CUT LOSSES,
FEAR OF LIBYAN DOMINANCE OF NEW SAHARA STATE SHOULD
ONE UNTIMATELY EMERGE, ETC. -- BUT SEE NO SIGNS
OF ALGERIAN SHIFT YET. OF COURSE, IT ONLY NOW BECOMING
CLEAR THAT BOUTEFLIKA AND LARAKI MET AT ALL.LYNE
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ALGIER02951
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760463-0130
From: ALGIERS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761235/aaaabdsc.tel
Line Count: 60
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <12 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LARAKI-BOUFEFLIKA MEETING IN PARIS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, AG, MO, (BOUFEFLIKA, ABDELAZIZ), (LARAKI, AHMED)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006